THE FOURTH DAY.

Thursday, the 28th February 1929.

The Assembly met again at 11-30 A.M. on Thursday, the 28th February 1929.

42. Improvement of the means of communication in the Todupuzha taluk.

MR. THOMMAN JOSEPH (*Member, Todupuzha taluk*) said that in the matter of means of communication, the Todupuzha taluk stood on an entirely different plane from the other taluks in the State. There were hardly any rivers, canals, or other natural means of communication in the taluk. In South and Central Travancore there was one mile of road for every square mile of area. Had the same care been bestowed by Government on the development of communications in the Todupuzha taluk there would today have been no fewer than 300 miles of road in that taluk. But the total length of roads in the taluk was now barely 58 miles, of which about 13 miles were opened by one or two European planters, and the remaining 45 miles were opened by Government, 20½ miles in response to twenty-four years' representations in the Assembly and 24½ miles on their own initiative. This would unmistakably show the interest which Government were taking in the welfare of Todupuzha and the attention they were paying to the representations made in the Assembly about Todupuzha.

Government had a few years back sanctioned the opening of four new roads in Todupuzha. Provision was being made every year in the Budget for these roads, but the allotments merely lapsed from year to year. Stringent instructions should be issued to the Public Works Department not to allow such lapsing of funds.

Of the four roads mentioned above, there was absolutely no work done in regard to the Vazhakulam-Vazhithala road, though it was five years since the road was sanctioned. In regard to the Vengallur-Kalur road, the work was once begun but it was soon dropped after opening three miles. Similarly the Muttam-Antinad-Melukavu road had been opened for a distance of one and a half miles and dropped after that. All this was due entirely to the negligence of the subordinate officers of the Public Works Department. They should be immediately instructed to complete the work of these roads.

Government should also complete and undertake the maintenance of (*a*) the ryots' road *via* Kallurkadu and Kuttichira, connecting the Todupuzha-Kalur road and the Vazhakulam-Kothamangalam road, and (*b*) the ryots' road running to the Todupuzha-Kalur road *via* Kallurkadu, Nagapuzha and Mailakompu.

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The following village roads *viz.*, (*a*) the road connecting the Todupuzha-Kaliyar road and the Varapatti-Naduvakkad road (*b*) the road from Karinkunnam *via* Purapuzha to Vazhithala and (*c*) the road *via* Manakkadu to Arikuzha should be converted into public roads.

The maintenance grant allotted for the Karikkodu-Sankarapilli road should be enhanced and the road should be widened.

The proposals made by Mr. John Kurian in connection with his inland navigation scheme should be brought into effect in regard to the Muvattupuzha, Todupuzha and Kaliyar rivers.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Thomman Joseph, the question of a road programme for Todupuzha will be taken up when the newly constituted board for internal communications comes into existence.

43. Means of communication in the Muvattupuzha taluk.

MR. EIPE ANTONY (*Member, Muvattupuzha taluk*) said that the taluks of North Travancore stood sadly behind the other taluks of the State in the matter of means of communication. This was a fact well known to Government and one which was impressed upon them in successive sessions of the Legislative Council and the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly. As a result of repeated representations in these houses, Government had declared that the question of opening more roads in North Travancore was engaging their particular attention. A few roads had accordingly been sanctioned some years back and for these provision was being made from year to year in the Budget, but the funds only lapsed every time the provision was made. There were also a few roads in respect of which work was started only to be dropped in no time. All this remissness was due primarily to the fact that Muvattupuzha could not boast of having any of her sons in the Public Works Department or for that matter in any department of the public service. Had she possessed a few officers in the Public Works Department, her fate would have been far better. There were also no people from Muvattupuzha in the Land Revenue Department. The result was that there was lamentable delay in the acquisition of lands etc., by that department for roads and other public works in Muvattupuzha. Such remissness on the part of officers could under existing conditions be removed only by the infliction of severe punishments by Government. Another grievance of the people of Muvattupuzha was that for every application they made for a road, they met with the answer that they should first surrender lands free of cost and secondly they should lay out the roads themselves, Government undertaking only their maintenance. This demand would have been just, had Government opened at least the main arterial roads in the taluk as they had done elsewhere and then asked the people to meet the cost of the minor roads. But before they had done so, they could not in fairness to the people of Muvattupuzha, make this demand of them,

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